

With this note I am resigning from the GoTransit Partners board of directors.

We need a future-focused solution to the mass transit challenges of Durham and the Triangle. And there are parts of the current plan, especially as it relates to development of Patterson Place, that I find very compelling.

However, an engineering issue arose after I joined the board that cannot properly be addressed in the timeframe required. That issue is the closing of the Blackwell/Corcoran rail crossing to vehicular traffic.

In 2002 I told the folks at McKinney that we were going to move our agency from its thirty-three year old home in Raleigh to the American Tobacco Campus in downtown Durham. To say they thought I was crazy is an understatement. But today all would agree it's one of the smartest things we've ever done.

That move help spark the renaissance of a great and thriving downtown that currently stretches from 147 on the south to Geer Street on the north. And Blackwell/Corcoran is the central artery that seamlessly connects it all.

Severing this artery would split downtown Durham, disrupting an urban district which has become the envy of other cities. And it would most certainly change the course of future development in Durham.

It very well may be that there is an opportunity to connect the two sides of the tracks with a spectacular pedestrian right of way that becomes a significant civic design feature. But that shouldn't come at the expense of Blackwell/Corcoran. And we certainly shouldn't be doing urban planning by knee-jerk response to an issue that should have surfaced much earlier in this design process.

This simply demands more thought than the timing of the light rail fundraising window allows.

Further, as we have discussed, I believe that at this stage of our city's development, there is pressing need for a holistic plan that brings to life a vision for how Durham looks, feels and lives, ten and twenty years from now. That plan needs to address how we want people to move around Durham, and how best to take advantage of our remaining open space.

Durham will continue to grow, with or without such a plan. But without it, we will continue to face one-off challenges whose one-off solutions are likely to result in a subpar outcome for a city that deserves better.

I hope that my resignation from GoTransit does not create a burden for you and the rest of the board. But under the circumstances I am no longer able to support the project.

Sincerely,

Brad  
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Chairman

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